


conference with the SPE, and facsimile correspondence of December 3rd, 9th, and 31st of 2002, it became apparent that claims 1-32 as originally filed in the instant application Serial No. 09/705,861 were accidentally interchanged by the USPTO with claims 1-30 originally filed in Applicant's separate application Serial No. 09/703,860. Thus, the USPTO prosecution file for the instant application Serial No. 09/705,861 inadvertently contains claims 1-30, which Applicant filed in application Serial No. 09/703,860 (see Attachment 1, Fee Transmittal Sheet, demonstrating Applicant filed thirty-two (32) claims in application Serial No. 09/705,861). Additionally, the USPTO prosecution file for application Serial No. 09/703,860 inadvertently contains claims 1-32, which Applicant filed in application Serial No. 09/703,860. The Examiner subsequently issued an inapposite Restriction Requirement in the instant application 09/705,861, based upon claims 1-30 as originally filed in the 09/703,860 application.

During the January 7, 2003 telephone conference, the SPE suggested that Applicant cancel claims 1-30, inadvertently contained in the USPTO's prosecution file of instant application Serial No. 09/705,861. The SPE further suggested that Applicant add the thirty-two (32) claims originally filed by Applicant in the instant application in order to resolve the accidental interchange of claims. In response to this Amendment, the SPE indicated that the Examiner would withdraw the 12 November 2002 Election/Restrictions Requirement without prejudice and issue a new Office Action based on claims 31-62 as added by means of the present Amendment.

Accordingly, Applicant hereby cancels claims 1-30 and adds claims 31-62, without prejudice, as follows:

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31. In a body appliance of the type having at least a first back element shaped to fit about a person's lower back region, the improvement comprising:
an iliac crest belt element attachable to an inner surface of the first back element, the belt comprising an elongated strip having a center portion and at least first and second ends,

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the elongated strip being sized and shaped so as to encircle the waist of the person with an adjustable circumference and tension, with the center portion positioned substantially against the lumbar spinal region of the back of the person, the strip including at least a first portion sized and shaped to urge against the iliac crests of the person.

32. The belt of claim 31 further comprising locking elements for adjusting the fit of the belt about the waist of the person and locking the belt about the waist of the person.

33. The belt of claim 32 wherein the locking elements include cooperating buckle and buckle-receiving elements disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively.

34. The belt of claim 32 wherein the locking elements include buckle and hook-and-loop elements disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively.

35. The belt of claim 32 wherein the locking elements include cooperating hook and loop fastening element disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively, so as to interlock.

36. The belt of claim 35 wherein the strip is constructed of substantially rigid material.

37. The belt of claim 36 wherein the strip is constructed from plastic.

38. The belt of claim 37 wherein the strip is constructed from a low density plastic.

39. The belt of claim 38 wherein the strip is constructed from polyethylene.

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40. The belt of claim 39 wherein the strip comprises an inner layer of relatively compressible material, and an outer layer of substantially rigid material.
41. The belt of claim 35 further comprising fastening elements for removably fastening the belt to the first back element.
42. The belt of claim 41 wherein the fastening elements are screws.
43. The belt of claim 40 further comprising fastening elements for non-removably fastening the belt to the first back element.
44. The belt of claim 43 wherein the fastening elements are rivets.
45. The belt of claim 40 wherein the belt is formed integrally with the first back element.
46. The belt of claim 40 wherein the belt interlocks with the first back element so as to impart additional stabilizing force to the back element.
47. A body brace comprising:
at least a first back element shaped to fit about a person's lower back region;
an iliac crest belt element attachable to an inner surface of the first back element, the belt comprising an elongated strip having a center portion and at least first and second ends;
the elongated strip being sized and shaped so as to encircle the waist of the person with an adjustable circumference and tension, with the center portion positioned substantially against the lumbar spinal region of the back of the person;
the strip including at least a first portion sized and shaped to urge against the iliac crests of the person.

48. The brace of claim 47 further comprising locking elements for adjusting the fit of the belt about the waist of the person and locking the belt about the waist of the person.

49. The brace of claim 48 wherein the locking elements include cooperating buckle and buckle-receiving elements disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively.

50. The brace of claim 49 wherein the locking elements include buckle and hook-and-loop elements disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively.

51. The brace of claim 49 wherein the locking elements include cooperating hook and loop fastening elements disposed in corresponding locations on the first and second ends, respectively, so as to interlock.

52. The brace of claim 51 wherein the strip is constructed of substantially rigid material.

53. The brace of claim 52 wherein the strip is constructed from plastic.

54. The brace of claim 53 wherein the strip is constructed from a low density plastic.

55. The brace of claim 54 wherein the strip is constructed from polyethylene.

56. The brace of claim 55 wherein the strip comprises an inner layer of relatively compressible material, and an outer layer of substantially rigid material.

57. The brace of claim 51 further comprising fastening elements for removably fastening the belt to the first back element.